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have come into use there is also much more travel by persons not familiar with the region through which they are going. Moreover, with automobiles numerous difficulties may arise that were not encountered by those traveling with horses and wagons. . . . No one should go in an automobile far from a town who is not sufficiently familiar with the mechanism of the machine to make necessary adjustment of the carburetor and spark plugs and other minor repairs or who cannot make repairs to tires. This seemingly needless statement is made because there are many persons who know only how to manipulate the throttle and brakes of their cars. The writer has come upon such persons stalled on main roads of the desert, and they would have been in a bad plight on less traveled roads."

Inasmuch as "such persons" appear to exist in large numbers, and as the desert actually exists in large area, there seems to be about as much danger when they attempt to cross it as there was in the early years of pioneer travel.

W. M. DAVIS

HEALTH AS A FACTOR IN HUMAN HISTORY

R. M. BINDER. **Health and Social Progress.** xi and 295 pp.; index. Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1920. 7½ x 5 inches.

One of the hopeful signs of the future is the growing recognition that man is biologically an animal. Books like Professor Binder's "Health and Social Progress" are helping the world to see this because they emphasize the intimate relations among three great factors, first the biological inheritance with which a man is endowed; second the physical health and energy with which he uses his endowments; and third, the external conditions such as education, religion, and government which determine the direction of his energies and the degree of wisdom with which they are used. Professor Binder stresses health, which is today perhaps the most neglected of these three factors. The thesis of his interesting book is that "No people has ever succeeded in rising above the level of savages unless it possessed at least fair health; where either economic or climatic conditions prevented health, no civilization could arise; and where it had arisen it was doomed whenever new conditions arose which undermined health." His description of the perfect poise and vigor of the man whose health is so good that he absolutely forgets his body is fine. So, too, is his discussion of many indirect ways in which even a slight departure from perfect health leads to discontent, poor work, poor temper, bad judgment, and general inefficiency.

Even more interesting is the author's summary of what has actually been accomplished by measures for the eradication of hookworm disease, pellagra, and other ailments. It is an extraordinarily significant fact that "about 940,000,000 out of the 1,600,000,000 people on the globe live in countries where hookworm disease is prevalent," and that in many of these countries the percentage of infection ranges anywhere from twenty to ninety per cent. When this is put with such facts as the following it shows that we are here face to face with one of the greatest of all the means of progress during the next century. "In Costa Rica sixty-six laborers before being treated for hookworm disease normally cultivated 563 acres of coffee monthly. After being treated for hookworm disease they cultivated 750 acres, resulting in a net monthly increase in wages of 27 per cent, after allowing for a 15 per cent reduction in unit pay. Moreover, in India, Clayton Lane reports that the amount of work increased 20 per cent on one estate and 50 per cent on another, and on both was of better quality than before the laborers were treated; while reports from British Guiana indicate that the efficiency of the laborers employed by one company increased from 25 to 50 per cent after hookworm measures were put into operation." Moreover, as Binder shows repeatedly, the deadening effect of poor health on man's capacity and happiness is a prime factor not only in backward regions, but even in our own country among people of high intelligence.

It is to be regretted that a book which contains so much that is good is marred by minor inaccuracies and overstatements and by an unusually strong tendency toward broad generalization with little or no visible basis of fact. For example, Sweden is stated to have the lowest death rate and longest life of all countries, although the *Annuaire International de Statistique* gives the death rates per thousand inhabitants for 1908-1913 as follows: Denmark 13.2, Norway 13.6, Netherlands 13.9, and Sweden 14.0; while England and Wales stands at 14.1, and New Zealand and Australia stand much below 14.0. Again olive oil and silk are given a prominent place among the "tropical" imports into the United States. Worse than these minor errors is the fact that in his enthusiasm for his subject the author minimizes the importance of everything else. For instance, he attributes ill health almost uni-

versally to parasites and food and makes an elaborate attempt to show that inheritance and climate are of minor importance. With this goes an unfortunate tendency to start with a thesis and "prove" it instead of starting with the facts and seeing what they prove.

Worst of all the author makes categorical statements which neither he nor any one else has proved: "The foods produced in the north could produce in combination with other favorable factors prevailing there, a strong physique and a strong brain, but not a fine nervous system and brain. The digestive organs were too much overburdened, for instance, with the assimilation of starch in northern latitudes, and the nerve fiber could not become as fine as that which was nourished on sugar." All this and much more is stated without a single qualification, as if it were a well demonstrated geographical truth, whereas it is merely an interesting hypothesis which is worth investigation. Nevertheless, Professor Binder's book well deserves reading. It stresses a great truth which geographers, economists, and historians must some day recognize, namely that the health of a people is at least as important as the material wealth of their country.

ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON

A TEXTBOOK OF PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON AND S. W. CUSHING. **Principles of Human Geography.** xiv and 430 pp.; maps, diagrs., ills., index. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York; Chapman & Hall, Ltd., London, 1920. \$3.50. 9 x 6 inches.

This is a textbook designed "to set forth the great principles of geography in its human aspects," to make clear "the relation of the physiographic environment to man's activities." In general, the arrangement of material and the allotment of space are commendable. Two-thirds of the book is devoted chiefly to the direct responses of man to the great elements of the physical environment—to location, land forms, water bodies, soil and minerals, and climate. The last third deals for the most part with man and his work in the leading climatic realms but includes brief chapters on the world's diet, man's changing surroundings, and the elements of political geography. The book is noteworthy for its many crisp, picturesque passages, some of which are written in a truly fascinating manner. Such discussions as that of the Kirghiz nomads (pp. 12-21) will help to arouse in students a lively interest in human geography. Many of the questions and problems at the ends of the chapters are adapted to promote clear and original thinking on the part of the student.

In spite of its good qualities the book, in the judgment of the reviewer, fails in its purpose and, except perhaps when used with caution by well-trained teachers, cannot give the "solid grounding" in human relationships which it was intended to provide.

1. The treatment is not consistently adapted to students of a given degree of maturity but varies from that appropriate in the elementary school to that suitable for the later years of the university. Pedagogically this is a serious defect. Such attempts to aid the young reader as that made on page 168 in indicating parenthetically the correct pronunciation of the word "prospecting" will prove amusing to more mature students.

2. In avoiding a technical treatment of the physical environment the authors have gone so far in some cases that the student doubtless will not get a clear understanding of the *effect of the environment on life*. The authors' viewpoint is reflected in the statement that "for practical purposes it makes relatively little difference how a plain or mountain originates" (p. 81). But it is important, for example, that the student shall understand the *characteristics* of delta plains, flood plains, lake plains, glacial plains, etc. (largely ignored in this book), if there is to be more than a superficial understanding of life responses in such areas. Certainly it would be unfortunate if the student shared the opinion of the authors that "under similar conditions of location, soil, and climate, plains of all kinds are much alike in being level places where the soil is deep" (p. 81); for most plains are not level, and in some of them the soil is not deep. Similarly the student would understand better the *effects* of climate if more were said concerning the *characteristics* of climates of different types.

3. A textbook should distinguish sharply between fact and theory; failure to do so tends to develop the cocksure, half-baked opinions frequently held by college sophomores. This is not done in the case of the tetrahedral theory (p. 51 *et seq.*) and of Dr. Huntington's theories concerning climatic changes and their human relations (pp. 370-374).

4. Although most of the illustrations are well chosen, some are not well placed or are not made to supplement the text effectively. Thus a map showing the migration of the cotton boll weevil appears on page 306 but is not referred to until pages 360 and 375 are